



HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE

Statement of Chairman Michael McCaul (R-TX) Homeland Security Committee

"Markup of H.R. 6620, H.R. 6735, H.R. 6740, H.R. 6742, and S. 1281"

September 13, 2018

Remarks as Prepared

This week we observed the 17th anniversary of the 9/11 terror attacks. While I was attending a memorial service at the Pentagon on Tuesday, many images from 9/11 returned to me.

I remembered the falling towers in New York and the fires at the Pentagon. I thought about the innocent lives that we lost, the pain we felt, and the uncertainty of what could happen next.

It was the greatest attack in the history of our nation – targeting economic, military, and political symbols of power.

But I also thought about the heroism of the passengers on United 93 and the courage of our brave first responders. I drew strength from our ability to come together as we recovered from this horrifying tragedy.

In the aftermath of the attacks we knew changes had to be made to keep our homeland safe. As a result, we created the Department of Homeland Security and the relevant Committees in Congress.

Since this is our last scheduled markup, I want to express what an honor it has been to serve as Committee Chairman.

I strongly believe our homeland is safer today than it was on 9/11 because of what we have accomplished together.

We've strengthened counterterrorism information sharing, bolstered cybersecurity, enhanced aviation security, increased border security, and provided much needed natural disaster relief.

In this Congress alone, we've passed 111 bills through our Committee and 105 through the House. Because of this work ethic, Politico named us the "hardest working Committee in Congress." The bills we passed included legislation to create a stand-alone operational organization to elevate the cybersecurity mission at DHS and the first ever, comprehensive reauthorization of the Department.

These bills, and many others, passed with overwhelming bipartisan support.

I've always said that partisanship must stop at the water's edge. Our enemies do not check our party affiliation before carrying out an attack. And I believe this Committee has led by example when it comes to putting national security above partisan politics.

Today, we have an opportunity to build on that record by marking up five more important pieces of legislation. Today's bills will:

1. Protect our critical infrastructure against drones (Richmond)
2. Report security vulnerabilities of public websites (McCarthy)
3. Establish Border Tunnel Task Forces (Sessions)
4. Equip CBP Officers with better communication devices (Mast)
5. Identify IT weaknesses at DHS with a bug bounty pilot program (Hassan)

Ranking Member Thompson, I want to thank you and your staff for all of your hard work throughout my Chairmanship. I'm very grateful for your commitment to the safety and security of the American people.

Our partnership has set a high bar for other Committees to follow.
I look forward to working with you and all other Members of this Committee in the future.

I now recognize the Ranking Member for an opening statement.

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